101 things to do when you get home

The Meridian Star put together this list of things for military personnel to do as soon as they get home from the Middle East. Some of these suggestions came from staff members, some from readers, some from Guardsmen and Reservists who have served overseas and come home. This list was originally supposed to have 1,001 things on it but, you know, we discovered 1,001 things wouldn't fit on the page ...

1. Go to New's Restaurant on Saturday and eat a plate of spaghetti as big as your head.

2. Drive on all the streets within a mile of your house to see how many are newly paved ... try to figure out why there are no stripes on the newly paved streets.

3. Go see if there's any water in Bonita Lakes yet.

4. Eat lunch at Jean's Restaurant. See and

5. Go nuts at Books-A-Million. 6. Soak in a Jacuzzi until you get

7. When your mother says,

"You look thin," don't fight with her about it — and eat whatever she cooks in quantities that make her happy.

8. Send a "care package" to your unit in Iraq.

9. Call WMOX's morning talk show and start something with Dumpster Dog.

10. Dig through the closet and put on a bunch of clothes that aren't the color of sand. Don't care when someone says, "That doesn't match, you know ..."

11. On your first day back at your civilian job, don't let on that you can't remember precisely what it is you're supposed to be

12. Go look at Extreme Excursions' new stretch Hummer limousine and think to yourself, "Only in America ...

13. Go grocery shopping with your wife. When she's not looking, load the buggy up with all the foods you've been craving.

14. Ask your child's social studies teacher if you can come talk to the class.

15. Take \$100 and feed it to the slots at the Silver Star

16. Ask to see everyone's snapshots of Hurricane Ivan damage.

17. Try not to salute the boss.

18. Grow your hair.

19. Go eat a lot of catfish at your favorite fish camp. Offer your opinion about the hushpuppy recipe. Lecture everyone within earshot about the perfect amount of mayonnaise to put in cole

20. Write a letter to your child to be opened on his or her 18th birthday. Talk about what was important about this time before the historians get a chance to re-write it.

friend and stare into space without saying anything.

21. Sit on the porch with your best

22. Sleep on crisp sheets in your calm, cool bedroom.

at your wife when she's not looking ... stare at her when she is.

23. Stare

24. Stare at your husband when he's not looking ... stare at him when he is.

25. Take issue with people who try to understand Michael Moore's point of view.

26. Don't yell at your wife's cat.

27. Don't roll your eyes when your husband's dog carries your dirty socks around with him all the time. He missed you, too.

28. Buy all the "trashy papers" at the grocery check-out line because Brittney Spears has been up to some stuff you need to know about.

29. Go hunting and think about how cool it is that deer don't shoot back.

30. Pick a fight with an Auburn fan.

31. Enjoy saying "yes, ma'am" and "yes, sir" in a whole different way.

32. See if your favorite jeans still fit.

33. Buy a bunch of fancy Avon stuff for your feet. Even if you're

34. Be romantic.

a guy.

35. Think about where Osama bin-Laden might be.

36. Let a grateful stranger pick up your dinner tab.

37. Go where people are singing. 38. Put a yellow ribbon decal on your own car. 39. Remember not to abbreviate everything when you're talking

THE YELLOW

RIBBON

Most cars and trucks in East Central

Mississippi and West Central Alabama

sport a yellow ribbon somewhere — a way to

honor the service of active-duty military personnel,

not yet been called up. Daniel Covert, a sophomore at

Guardsmen and Reservists. Those who have served and

returned, those who are serving now, and those who have

Meridian High School, created this yellow ribbon. Here's what

he wrote about his collage: "For the past couple of years, the

I believe that the people serving feel this and appreciate it.

scenes of Meridian and its support of the troops. There are

pictures of helicopters and planes, as well pictures of the Doughboy Monument and The Memory Tree. These are both

great ways of supporting the people in the war. I hope that everyone continues to do their best to show their appreciation

43. Color a picture with your daughter in her new Barbie Doll

48. Look at the night sky. Try to remember if it looked any

49. Walk barefoot on your lawn even if it is 50 degrees outside.

50. Talk on the phone as long as you want just because you can.

51. Refuse to go to the beach this year for the family vacation

for the people fighting for our country."

44. Put \$100 in the collection plate.

45. Notice how green everything is.

because there's too much sand.

46. Sit on the porch with your father's friends.

coloring book.

47. Breathe.

different in Iraq.

United States has been supporting the troops in different ways ... Many of us have placed yellow ribbons on our cars or on trees.

I think everyone should continue in their efforts to support these brave people. My project portrays a yellow ribbon with different

40. Run for office.

41. Overtip.

42. Try not to wake up with every nerve on alert when it thunders.

52. Thank your church for praying for you while you were gone.

53. Unwrap your Christmas presents.

54. Have Thanksgiving dinner.

55. Celebrate the birthdays you missed.

56. Let your mom fill you in on all the gossip.

57. Whenever someone states an opinion, no matter what it is, remember you're one reason they are able to express

58. Go fishing.

59. Resist the impulse to "inspect" the children's

60. Go to bed at 10:30 p.m. instead of 2230.

61. Waste water.

62. Check out Harry Mayer's new store on Highway 39 North.

63. Ride the Southern Crescent to New Orleans.

64. Make bets on sporting

65. Make bets on how many red cars drive by in the next hour.

> 66. Go to a wine-tasting.

67. Tell the girl you have a crush on that you have a crush on her. Why not?

68. Tell the guy you have a crush on that you have a crush on him. Why not?

69. Lose weight, gain weight, whichever.

70. Treasure your privacy.

71. Call people by their first names.

72. Complain about the national news media's coverage of the war.

73. Reclaim your half of the closet.

74. Accept dinner invitations.

75. Remember how to pronounce "all right" in one syllable with no consonants.

76. Mark off a calendar with "x's" starting from the day you get home. Have a party on the day you've been home longer than vou were overseas.

77. Get in a car with your family, pack your favorite music, bring all of your maps and drive until you find a place you'd like to stop and explore.

78. Propose.

79. Hog the remote control.

80. Throw a tennis ball with your dog.

81. Try to find something real about reality

82. Create clutter.

83. Catch up on all the movies you missed.

84. Go to a revival.

85. Set the table with matching china, use cloth napkins, fire up a couple of long, skinny candles.

86. Call CNN, MSNBC and Fox News and tell them you've heard enough about Michael Jackson now, thank vou verv much.

87. Set your own hours.

88. Hold doors, pay compliments, give a lady your chair.

89. Let someone hold the door, say "thank you," take the chair.

90. Act the fool.

begs for mercy.

92. Let your wife scratch your back until you beg for mercy.

95. Use binoculars to look at ... birds!

96. Attend city council meetings. Call up your supervisor and express an opinion.

97. Sit down and watch all the videotapes your family made of events you missed.

98. Go see a Meridian Community College baseball game.

100. Remember the military service of your father, your grandfather, even your great-grandfather, and all the sacrifices made for freedom's sake.

101. Just sit back and relax, thank God you're back, and pray for those still over in Iraq.

91. Make your husband massage your shoulders until he

COLLAGE BY DANIEL COVERT

93. Play canasta with your grandmother and her friends.

94. Balance the checkbook.

99. Tour Merrehope.